

The COMMONWEAL

VOLUME XLIV September 13, 1945 NUMBER 22

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THE COMMONWEAL is indexed in the Reader's Guide, Catholic Periodical Index and Catholic Bookman. Founded by the Calvert Associates, Inc., in 1924, with Michael Williams as President and Editor.

Published weekly and copyrighted 1946 in the U. S. A. by The Commonwealth Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. ASland 4-9685. Entered as second class matter February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. U.S. and Canada \$6 a year, Foreign \$7 Single copies 15c

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Learn Something; Forget Something!

FOR THE first voting in the Russian zone of Germany — some municipal elections in Leipzig, Dresden and other parts of Saxony— American reporters agreed that it was not the elections themselves which were rigged, but the campaign leading to them. The Socialist Unity party, unfairly sponsored by the Russian Occupying Power, took 56 percent of the votes, and it was considered remarkable that so far was all the farther they could get with all the pressure employed. The Liberal Democratic party received 22.1 percent of the votes, and the Christian Democratic Union, 21.8 percent.

Before Hitler, the areas of election were strongly Social Democratic. This time, the Social Democrats were either dragooned into the communist sponsored Unity party, or else, in small numbers, they abstained or spoiled their ballots (313,188 turned out invalid), or else they voted one of the minority tickets. Quantities of the old Social Democrats, with various other fellow citizens, preferred to vote Liberal Democratic rather than Christian Democratic. The latter failed to rally many non-Catholics, and preeminently old Social Democrats, into their pronouncedly Catholic party. There are many probable partial reasons which it would be interesting to examine: we will speculate upon one which formed the conclusion of a New York Times

report by Dana Adams Schmidt, the last Sunday in August:

The communists may be exploiting German nationalism, but the Catholic Church is not far behind. The Bishops at Fulda generally evaded the question of German guilt in the war, excused German "mistakes" and commiserated with German sufferers.

If the German Catholic Church lost little in the war, it learned little that is new. It may help preserve Germany from communism, but it offers little promise of yanking the Germans out of their old follow-the-Fuehrer complex, or of solving their problems.

Now, it isn't the Church's function, through its hierarchy or its religious and charitable institutions, to solve the economic and political problems of Germany or of any country. As Mr. Schmidt says, "Any responsible member of the Church hierarchy will deny, as a number did during the past week's conference of German Bishops in Fulda, that the Catholic Church is committed to any particular party. But it remains a fact that the success of the Christian Democrats in the American zone was largely a Catholic success, and the Catholic Church has a vital stake in their success in the forthcoming elections in the Russian, British and French zones." There is, in short, a strong, de facto hook-up between the new, or resurrected "Catholic" German parties and the clergy. There is so strong a relationship that the result is some kind, at least, of clericalism, which obviously puts off non-Catholics, even in the Russian zone, where the clergy is most careful and where the independent lay leadership under Jakob Kaiser is most powerful. The active relationship of ecclesiastical authority to political activity in Germany likewise tends to put off many German Catholics from full and creative activity in the new Christian Democratic (or Social) Union.

It is not only that ordained Church officials, from local pastors to cardinals, have so much to say about the political parties and tend to crowd out the ideas and influence and energies of lay persons. It is also the cast of mind of the clerics and of the lay leaders with whom they function in the secular field. That cast of mind appears far too many places far too unreconstructed. The German Catholic priests, and Protestant ministers, who were compromised with Hitler have had a far easier time since "liberation" than the Catholic clergy, say, in France, who capitulated to Pétain. There has been practically no noticeable purge or change in control or in tone in guiding echelons among Catholics in Germany. The old Center, still more obviously the old People's Party, are not adequate for the post-war times. The old defensive cast of mind, fearful, conservative, sentimentally aristocratic and royalist, which too heavily balanced progressive efforts, is not broad and new enough to meet the conditions that exist. And Germany has leaders among the

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Catholic clergy and laity whose Faith is staunch, whose character is uncompromised with Hitlerism and whose emotional and mental makeup is strong enough to face and build upon the new world. If these new men can go ahead, the Christian Democratic Union will not end up at the bottom of the heap as now in Saxony.

Any Old Stick to Beat a Devil?

IN THE broad field of American enterprise institutional advertising holds an honorable place. It reached out to the larger buying public during the war when certain big corporations with long established trade names literally had nothing tangible to sell. One of the most ardent believers in this general sort of self-promotion has been the Hearst newspaper chain. The burden of the advertisements flaunting William Randolph Hearst's idea of "awakened and informed public opinion" is that his papers year after year (instances are listed by dates) have consistently taken the right line in public matters. A strongly nationalist vein appears in most of these accountings of a work well done. Whether it was skepticism about the Kellogg Pact or insistence on rigidly curtailed immigration, the Hearst papers as an institution view themselves as the pillar of our American republic.

Another device aimed in the same direction is their espousal of causes for which they can drum up sentiment. At times the cause is good—as in the recent Hearst drive against indiscriminate sale of habit-forming drugs. Again the objective may be quite the reverse but yet embody an appeal which rings the emotional stops with many readers, i.e., support of laws forbidding medical research involving vivisection of animals.

It is in this framework, set off against the well-known sensational character of the Hearst papers now appearing in a dozen or more American cities, that their present campaign against obscene literature (at least if it appears in book form) must be viewed.

Before proceeding to the nature of the Hearst campaign itself, it is important to point out that there are few problems more intricate than making operative any effective ban on the publication or distribution of unwholesome reading fare. If stringent laws are passed and the state attempts seriously to enforce them, such publishers and distributors are driven underground—to mention only one difficulty.

What the Hearst papers are now after is apparently a Congressional investigation of the book publishing trade. In order to obtain this—or at least get credit for the most highly laudable moralistic sentiments—they have won the outspoken support of a wide range of public spirited citizens: bishops, priests, ministers, war veterans, social workers, legislators and editors.

Diocesan papers such as the *Catholic News* of New York have explicitly given the Hearst drive the warmest editorial support.

Everything has gone smoothly practically everywhere. There was a slight hitch in Seattle where, according to *Time*, the bright idea of printing a 1909 local statute against "dirty novels" was unhappily for the hopeful Hearst *Post-Intelligencer* found to include a provision dealing with owning, lending, selling, giving away or showing any newspaper "largely made up of criminal news, police reports, accounts of criminal deeds or pictures or stories of deeds of lust or crime." While in the East the staunch and independent editor of the official *Pittsburgh Catholic*, referring to suggestive advertisements in the local Hearst paper participating in the campaign, described this clean-literature campaign as "Nauseating . . . about as hypocritical a display as the long record of Hearst hypocrisy presents."

Things have indeed come to a sorry pass at the end of summer 1946 if we are to welcome as guardians of the public morality such notorious members of the fourth estate.

The CIO in the Home Town

THE CIO and its PAC have lately been running into some very angry comment on the part they played in the defeat of men like Senators Wheeler and LaFollette. (See letter from Norman Thomas in September 6 COMMONWEAL.) A great deal of this anger is justified, particularly in regard to the tactics used in smearing Wheeler and the failure to endorse LaFollette, even though one may retain, as Mr. Thomas does, some reservations on the vigor and soundness of Mr. Wheeler's liberalism in more recent years, as evidenced by his strange opposition to MVA.

In general, however, a distinction should be made between the national CIO and PAC on the one hand and local divisions of the same organizations on the other. For it is the latter which are responsible for local endorsements. In states like Michigan, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Missouri, for example, where anti-communist elements are in control, it is virtually certain that the CIO would have supported LaFollette and worked for his nomination, despite his isolationist record and his recent tie-up with the Republican Party. The unfortunate fact is that in Wisconsin the CIO is dominated by the CP element, and it was this element that was responsible for the failure to return to the Senate one of labor's most consistent and courageous champions. A bad thing and a sad thing.

Admitting all this, and recognizing how local leaders can twist to their own purpose the most elegant instrument, one may still applaud the work done by the CIO Community Services Committee, which recently made public the fruit of its

first four years of activity. The most perfect example of this fruit is to be found in the Pittsburgh area, where CIO members have taken their places on an imposing list of local community boards. These include "housing bodies, the Hospital Council of Western Pennsylvania, the Allegheny County Planning Committee, Catholic Charities, price control, old-age insurance, veterans' problems, public assistance, social security advice, unemployment compensation, free legal aid, National Fund for Prevention of Cancer, health and safety, personal and family problems, hospital clinics."

The Committee points out that when it first started its work in 1942 there were less than 40 CIO members in the whole country serving on such community boards, while today there are more than 3,000. Although the Committee itself, on the national plane, is under sound leadership, it is more than likely that many of the local unionists whom it has trained or encouraged to participate in this work are pushing the Stalinist line wherever occasion presents itself. It is even more likely, however, that on the whole these local boards are hearing for the first time the voice of a vigorous and essential segment of the community. And that is a good thing. (We assume that AFL representation in 1942 was not much better than that of the CIO.)

In fact, it is the claim of Phil Murray, CIO president, that "the working man is the community" and that unless he takes his rightful part in community planning, the latter is going to enjoy neither the brains, energy nor success that it deserves. Time was, of course, when the people who picked the people who serve on public hospital boards were content to select several clergymen, a lawyer, an educator, the usual quota of doctors and a nice sizable chunk of successful businessmen. It is at least refreshing that these people, with some remaining exceptions, are coming to recognize that there are still other standards of success, still other qualifications for the right to represent the public. From their association with the men and women of labor these board directors can learn something. And the men and women of labor can certainly learn something from them. It should be a good thing all round.

For Americans to Study China

DURING the first forty years of the present century it was a common thing to find both Japanese and Chinese students in American colleges and universities, the former either sons of the very wealthy or subsidized by the Imperial Government. The Chinese, probably more numerous, were here to a large extent thanks to our having returned a great part of our Boxer Indemnity to the Chinese government, which in turn elected to use these funds as a source of scholarships for

Chinese students in this country. Despite the war with Japan, one suspects that the net result of this largely one-way intercourse has been good. It has certainly won us much friendship among Chinese leaders and it has probably somewhat simplified the task of General MacArthur. In any case, it is encouraging to read that the China Institute in America has decided to award ten scholarships to American veterans who served in the China theater. These scholarships provide for a year's study of things Chinese in this country, possibly to be followed by an additional year or two of study in Chinese universities. An excellent committee has been selected to represent the Institute in awarding these scholarships, its chairman being Dr. Hu Shih, a Chinese independent democrat who served his country as an ambassador in Washington for several years and who has the highest reputation for scholarship and personal integrity; he was himself partly trained in the United States. It is high time that we began to increase the personnel of that group of Americans solidly founded in their knowledge of Far Eastern cultures. When carefully administered, interchanges of this sort can do nothing but good.

N. B.

IF ANYONE has said anything these days about atomic energy running ocean liners or heating cities or turning deserts into green pasture lands we are sorry to have missed what they wrote. In what we have read, atomic energy is simply the atomic bomb—which we made, dropped on Japan, and are continuing to manufacture. It is the bomb that people talk about, and always in the future tense: how to use it, if necessary, how to keep other nations from using it, if possible. It is always in the future. But the *New Yorker*, throwing out all its cartoons and departments, fills an entire issue (August 31) with an account by John Hersey of how, in the past, the atomic bomb fell on Hiroshima. It would be a pity indeed if Americans forgot this accomplishment, the horrors of which have been recounted by Japanese survivors to Mr. Hersey.

Buyers' Strike

THE MORNING fog delayed the pilot and the tugs and all the various operations for bringing the Liberty Ship from its overnight anchorage to the Government dock in Boston harbor. The fog began to lift around nine or nine-thirty, but there was still delay because then the Transportation Corps couldn't get hold of tugs to do the work.

This was the beginning of the thirteenth day on board for the 800 soldiers and officers who had been shipped out of Barry, Wales, last fall, 1945, between decks in the forward three holds

of this particular Liberty Ship. Their situation was not ideal but was probably very typical—"not ideal but typical" had been a standard phrase since basic training and had fit almost every experience in three or four or five years: how many could be told by "hershey bars" on the left sleeve.

The ship had dropped anchor at about five o'clock the afternoon before, just too late for the debarkation machinery to work, or for it to want to work. The anchorage was right inside the island with the enormous sign pointing outward, "Welcome home to our boys—Thanks for a job well done." The men had finally gone to bed for a brief while and then had got out of their triple or quadruple (and some even quintuple, 5) decked bunks at five o'clock or earlier that morning so they would be prepared to land on their home shore. The morning was dark and drippy and occasionally rainy and the men wondered if they should bring their bags on deck right away or wait. By six, though, breakfast was over, all the barrack bags and bed rolls and flight bags and miscellaneous bags were orderly and damper on deck, and the 800 soldiers, having hurried up, were waiting.

Toward ten o'clock the weather was clearing very well to a slate gray and there was no more rain and Boston looked magnificent. A rather fancy looking harbor tug approached the troop ship and the damp lethargy on deck was stirred by some hope of interest. However, it was not a pushing or pulling tug, one could see quickly, and then one heard the canned dance music roaring off it through a typical but not ideal public address amplifier, and then while it came right up and circled the Liberty Ship very near, one could see the whole deal. It was a welcome boat with the signs and that jazz music and with about ten WAC's dancing with each other on a little open space, swinging themselves around jitterbug.

After circling the ship and gaining whatever faded attention it could from the passenger soldiers, now in their fifth hour of damp and passive huddle, the tug slowed up and a Special Service Officer aboard it, a very sharp lieutenant indeed with a beautiful uniform, took up an electric megaphone and talked to the boatload of returning soldiers: "No more gasoline rationing!" That was literally the first word from the home shore that boatload heard. "Meat rationing off next month!" And it went on for several more startling items—something about shoes, but everybody on board had good shoes, and something about several other advertised commodities typifying, presumably, or epitomizing the land approached. Then, after the poetry (the bang opening, S.O.P. for Army talks), "we are glad you're home . . ." and the lieutenant delivered some dull, prosaic instructions about debarkation which made it sound like a still more interminable

job than men had been able to imagine in all that five hours.

After him, a very pretty and efficient WAC sergeant grabbed the megaphone and undertook to joke and kid the unlikely troops of semi-paralyzed, waiting returnees. In spite of all, she worked to a climax, surrounded by her jitterbug colleagues, "Do you still love American girls best, boys?" She shouldn't have asked that question quite then and there was a rude and embarrassing pause. Then unarranged and all at once came the first vocal reaction from the Liberty Ship from nearly everybody on deck: "No."

As they finally pulled the ship up to the pier, some familiar Red Cross girls began tossing bottles of fresh fluid milk to the men who began to stir alive and were, as it turned out, hungry. There were a number of big South Boston female stevedores in dungarees and working sweaters waiting around the pier who threw out morning newspapers and good, natural remarks and the ship came more alive. A couple of the soldiers by the rails would look down quietly but with approaching interest and call, "Hi'ya, Fräulein. See you at the gangplank." Anyway, one way or another, internal motion and circulation built up aboard and the soldiers actually hit the home shore, forgetting after a few appreciative remarks the quality of the recent mood.

Big signs, loud music, gasoline, meat, shoes, American girls, the morning papers and bottled milk were the things the people at home first and forcefully presented to these not ideal but typical returning soldiers last fall. Their first enthusiasm was not overwhelming. A number of years, or at least hours of the long evening and night and morning before had grown moods and minds that were not immediately captivated. And how cheated they would have been if they had accepted those things as the symbol of home and crown of the Republic and sweet spoils of war.

Except, perhaps, for shoes, those things have all been trouble makers constantly since those men landed in 1945. For a moment out in the rain and waiting, the soldiers knew quite well that the most important problem in the world and the thing they thought most of home was not to get for themselves quantities of scarce materials which only the power and riches of America could produce and could secure against the poverty and desperation they had seen. Bowles to Snyder to Porter to Anderson to Congress to Reuther to the PAC: meat and shoes, gasoline and cars, loud speakers and American girls have their place, no traveler would deny. But a year of reconverting effort still fails quite to convince that the much desired, appeasing peace comes that way—even if the machinery turned out the unheard-of most of those things, cheapest.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

Punishment of Italy

It might possibly be wise
to allow Italy to exist

C. G. Paulding

IF IT WERE only the names that would be enough, the name Venice, the name Florence, the name Rome, you would be thinking of Italy and you would not want Italy to disappear—but then wherever men have built anything and named it, Hiroshima, Lodz, that is enough; you know that something has been built where there was nothing before and that people are living together somewhere and that where they live is no longer a piece of the map that can be torn out and it will not matter.

The bombs on the cities destroyed many cities but they put the names of the cities in our minds and there are many cities now that are living in our minds that we did not know before. There are many cities that have to be rebuilt and there are the cities, which were not ruined, to save. There is the city of man to rebuild and to save.

During the war you had the enemy nations, the enemy cities, the enemy children with their toys, the enemy grain, horses, landscape, language, but now it might be possible to look only at the landscape, think only of decorating it with green, yellow and purple fields, dotting it with villages connected by roads, peopling it with men and women—so that there will be something for the next war to ruin. Even if peace were only for a few years it might be well to start building things up in as many places as you can because, after all, you cannot tell where a next war would be and where it would strike, there might be a few places where you had been building where it would not strike, but if you do not build at all then it does not matter where the next war strikes, or how widely, because there would be nothing much to ruin.

You have to live that way, precariously, and each time a war is over it is better to forget a great deal about the enemies and think about people wherever they are, attempting to provide them with grain, hope and houses so that they will have some plan other than that of turning to futile and bitter revolution, or of turning their faces to the wall to wait for death.

That is why if you want a decent peace treaty for Italy you do not have to be exclusive about it. You do not have to want a reasonable peace with Italy and an unreasonable peace with Germany. You are not compelled to say that Western

Europe is the only thing that counts and that anything goes if someone is talking about Japan. It is only that Italy is the country most possible to save—for the common fund of our civilization. You do not even have to say that the civilization of Western Europe is the civilization most important to save. It is only that this civilization is the one closest to hand, it is only that it is ours, and if we do nothing to save it we might not know even how to read and write and whatever other civilizations survived in the world we would not be able to help them; they would have to help us if they took enough interest to want to help us.

So that you do not have to belong to the friends of Italy society in order to have a reason for wanting Italy to be saved—or to have been rich with a villa in Fiesole, or a rented palace in Venice. You do not actually have to want to return to Italy and be a rich American again with everyone saying *si signore* and in Naples *Eccellenza*. All you have to do is not to want people to be miserable anywhere needlessly and to die. You do not need to have read Dante enough to recognize him in T. S. Eliot, or to have ploughed through Manzoni. You do not need to have read the "Decameron" for the dirt, or Alfieri in order to know what extremity of hatred a man can feel for the French Revolution, or Carducci in order to know what fullness of love a man can have for the *Risorgimento*. And the other way about, you do not have to have read Stendhal putting English words in his letter from Civitavecchia in order to fool the Pope's censors, or Meredith writing about the revolutionaries, or "South Wind," in order to know how the expatriates on Capri corrupted the natives and were corrupted by the natives. You do not have to be able to remember how difficult it was to burn Shelley's body on the beach at Viareggio, with the smoke and the smell, or recall the theater in Venice with Byron taking the Countess into his own box instead of obeying the conventions and being content with visiting her in her husband's. You do not need to know the Sitwells on Baroque and to have seen the work of Italian architects all over Europe and in Scandinavia and Russia, or to know the Corot painting of the Trinità dei Monti.

And the other way about again, from the in-

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side, you do not need to have seen the galleries of the Vatican or the cascades between the tall trees at Tivoli or, in the catacombs, the figure with the hands uplifted in the position of the *orante* or, faded, but clear, that first figure of the shepherd bearing the sheep. You do not have to be Virgilian, or follow Augustine in those first steps that any man ever took into our modern world, you do not have to take a position in the quarrel between Byzantium and Rome, between the Capulets and the Montagues, between the Piedmontese and the South. All that is necessary is to desire that people should not be needlessly miserable and should not die from starvation. Then it will be natural to want a decent peace treaty with Italy.

It is not at all necessary that you should forget or minimize the almost incredible source of evil that Italy was under Mussolini, in connivance with Mussolini, following and accepting to follow Mussolini. It is extremely unnecessary to forget fascism, particularly if you did not recognize fascism until this country was at war with fascism. You can remember the men, the socialists and the others who were beaten in the police stations and suffered in the filthy prisons on the islands. They refused Mussolini long before the Ethiopian war. And you can remember the rich who accepted him and the mass of the Italian people who accepted him because for so long they had accepted anyone who governed them. You can remember the heroes and you can remember the responsibility of the Italian people. (You can do that for Germany also.) You can remember the snobs, the virtuous Italian princes, who thought that if they told stories about Mussolini's vulgarity they were doing all they had to do. You can remember responsible Catholics who knew all the rules and did not apply them. You can remember also Don Sturzo who knew the rules, applied them immediately, and in consequence grew old for twenty-two years in exile. (It will do no harm to remember also that Don Sturzo lived for a long time somewhere lost in Brooklyn, N. Y., and that the kind help, affection and solicitude given him by twenty-three million American Catholics was just sufficient to allow him to eat.)

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It is a fact also that fascism meant war. At first it was the Battle of the Grain, the Battle of the Lira, the Victory of the Timetable, the Battle for Birth (with the birthrate declining). There were constant battles and constant victories and most people thought they were encouraging to watch. But at the very start there was a first decisive battle, a victorious campaign in two actions: fascism threw Matteotti's mutilated body into a ditch; fascism raised its right arm in tri-

umphant salute over the ruins of parliament and freedom. From that day fascism marched to war. Fascism meant war and declared war. The Italians marched off to war.

I saw them in Naples slinking off to war. The fascists had to order the Ballilas and the Children of the Wolves and the Red Cross nurses and the local blackshirt sections down to the docks to see the Italian soldiers driven off to fight the Ethiopians. They had bands playing tunes as the soldiers climbed the gangplank just as later they raced motor truck engines to cover the sound of firing squads.

After Ethiopia they went back to the Battle of the Grain for a while, and the Battle for Housing, but that was too much like work, so they went in for the Battle of Diplomacy and the Battle for Position. Betraying and betrayed, Spain followed, and Corfù; there were the private murders—the Roselli brothers at Bagnoles de l'Orme; then there was the war. Entered upon with the greatest inelegance with the attack on France, with the heaviest greed and the lightest frivolity, it was pursued through a series of disgraces and failures, Albania, Greece, Africa, until it was lost.

That is something that has to be remembered.

But there is this also that must be remembered. When the whole greedy filthy business had failed, the disgust and fury of large numbers of Italians broke out against the fascist régime and against the Germans. A considerable number of Italians gave their lives to avenge their shame. For some time, for a long time the Resistance Movement in the North lost a thousand men a week. That is something to remember.

It was as if men who for years had been distressed, coerced and confused suddenly had found a clear and desirable duty to perform, and at the same time had found the courage needed to perform it. Here was an enemy to drive out of the country and here was an enemy, the worst enemy, within the country—and for the first time the fascist was off balance and you could strike him. It was not the entire Italian people who rose against fascism even when fascism was falling. As usual, naturally, the way it would happen anywhere with any people, it was a minority that acted. Still, it is something to remember.

Who can tell, who cares, whether this heroism paid for that shame. An accounting is impossible.

It is best to remember both the shame and the heroism. It is best to look at the mixture of good and bad that all nations have been as far back as we know anything about them: to look at the Italians in their poverty and distress now, and to look at them singly. It is best to look back at this parade of Italians throughout history each one of them singly advancing, bearing whatever name comes into your head, the name of the

murderer and of the saint—even of the saint whose tombstone they misread, and it is a woman and not a man, or it is an error in the copy of a medieval *itinerarium*. It is best to look at the buildings, the statues, the paintings. It is best to look at the terrace on the sharp hill with the village on top of it where they have carried rocks to make a wall and carried earth from the valley to fill in between the wall and the slope of the hill so that they can grow something to eat. The woman mounts the twisting path in the heat of the day bearing the amphora on her head with the right arm burned dark by the sun raised to steady the vase as she proceeds one step slowly after another; she pauses to rest and looks down at the valley.

It is best to look at people living now with their names that we know and their photographs in the papers and the speeches they make. (Because we cannot go to look at the poor but that would be the thing to do, we cannot be in the Roman apartment house that was in the Italian film they brought here about the Resistance Movement, when the man comes back from looking for work or even from work and the children are there who did not ask to be there but who have to be fed.)

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So that there is de Gasperi speaking to the Peace Conference in Paris who says that he can count on nothing from the delegates except "their personal courtesy." "I stand in the dock."

It is time now to stop this business of endless judging. Here is a man who has something to say as if he meant it:

"I lift my voice as the representative of a new republic which blends the humanity of Mazzini's vision with the universal aims of Christianity and the international hopes of the working class, a republic striving toward the lasting and constructive peace which you are also seeking, and toward that co-operation between nations which it is your task to establish."

It is something that he has this idea in his head, it is not something to laugh at, it is not something that it would be wise to discourage. It is not wise that already de Gasperi and the Italians have been discouraged. It is not as a result of wisdom that Italians in the North who were formerly of the Resistance now are rising against the new Italian republic in chaotic revolt. It will not be a result of superior wisdom if a punitive peace treaty is imposed on an Italian government which will fall if it is forced to accept it. It will not be a result of wonderful and wise planning if the Italians have no way of working, no colonies in which they may work, no ships with which they can trade. Unless you want the Italians to leave their cities, ravage the farms, kill

the farmers with their pigs and then go out into the forests and hunt for acorns. Unless you want them to become Etruscans again and make Etruscan jewelry for export (to pay the reparations) and bury the dead in mounds again, with the dead—the husband and wife sitting together—in sculpture over the tomb. But it took a long time to become an Etruscan; the men who became Etruscans had gone beyond the stage of eating acorns long before they became Etruscans with a civilization. If you take people with a civilization already, and send them out to eat berries off the bushes and root for truffles with their noses, it is not so certain that they will make the Apollo of Veii or produce vases with dark warriors on horseback at war or hunting, or perfume jars with a girl's body curving to form the handle, or the delicate comb, or the jeweled ring. It is not certain that if the Italians despair they will make anything to put in a museum. It is not certain that the despair of forty-three million Italians can safely be localized in Italy. It is not certain that Europe can contain an area of despair even if the people who are desperate have been fascists. It might possibly be wise to provide Italy with buildings, food, commerce, freedom, in order to permit Italy to exist.

The Italians say that they must be granted a credit of \$880,000,000 or else they will face starvation in 1947. That is what they are asking for now. "Should Italy be made to carry the amount of financial economic burdens contemplated by the treaty under discussion in Paris, there is no doubt in the minds of the Italians that their economy would suffer a staggering blow and make us even more dependent on foreign aid," de Gasperi said. "The alternative would be starvation and perhaps collapse."

That is clear enough and no one has said anything about it's not being the truth.

Then it is time for the Peace Conference in Paris to decide whether Italy is to get money from the United Nations or pay money to the United Nations, whether Italy is to get the things that technicians say are necessary for a country's existence or hand these things over to the countries which now claim war reparations. There is no use arguing about the justice of these claims. The Greek claim is just if ever any reparations claim is just; the Russian claim for \$100,000,000 would seem less urgent; the British claim for \$11,520,000,000 is an Alice in Wonderland move—a generous and witty move by an outraged accountant—to reduce all the claims to absurdity.

But it is not wise to have allowed the peace settlement with Italy to have reached a point where the Italians can hope only in someone's Olympian sense of humor. They are listening to hear if any word comes from any man's heart.

Science Under Dictate

The joys of being a
geneticist in the USSR

Joseph Bernstein

“**W**HERE IS Vavilov, one of Russia’s greatest scientists and one of the world’s greatest geneticists? Vavilov was elected president of the International Genetics Congress which met in Edinburgh in 1939, but Vavilov did not attend, and we have not heard from him since. We now have information from our National Academy of Sciences that Vavilov is dead. How did he die and why?”

This is not an excerpt from a spy-thriller by E. Phillips Oppenheim, but was written by Professor Karl Sax of Harvard University, himself a distinguished authority on heredity, in a letter published in America’s leading scientific journal, *Science*, December 21, 1945. Thus was illuminated in a stark and penetrating light one of the strangest and most significant controversies in the history of science. Behind a seemingly innocuous dispute over a scientific question has been shown to lurk the terror and bigotry of a totalitarian state in its effort to throttle the freedom of scientific inquiry.

The controversy involves the truth of the basic principles of the science of genetics, the study of heredity in all living organisms, plant, animal, and human, as originally founded by Gregor Mendel and developed by Thomas Hunt Morgan and his students as the theory of the gene. This conception of the mechanism of heredity has long been hailed throughout the civilized world as one of the greatest discoveries in science, contributing to biology what the atomic theory did to the physical sciences. Perhaps nowhere else than in Russia and the United States had such great advances in the development of superior breeds of plants and animals as well as in the more abstract aspects of heredity occurred as a result of the application of the principles of Mendel and Morgan, and the leader of the Soviet Union’s geneticists was Professor N. I. Vavilov.

But in 1932 the ruling clique in Russia began to look at Vavilov and his followers with a jaundiced eye. Responsible for this lapse from grace was an uneducated, practical fruit-culturist named I. V. Michurin, who was revered throughout the length and breadth of the USSR as a saint. This fabulous figure, who particularly endeared himself to the people because of his peasant-like existence, and was hailed as the Russian “Luther

Burbank,” had let it become known that modern genetics as practiced by Vavilov, with its emphasis on the transmission of character-bearing particles located in the sex cells as the mechanism of heredity, was nothing less than a major heresy against dialectical materialism, the living gospel of the Marxist faith, in that it failed to stress the dominating rôle of the environment. Since one of the cardinal tenets of Soviet materialist philosophy is the overwhelming significance of the environment in determining scientific, political, artistic and social ideas, the declaration of such an anathema was enough to make the storm break with a vengeance over the heads of the geneticists.

If any Russian scientist had ever cherished any fond illusions about the traditional right to freedom of scientific inquiry in a totalitarian state, let the chips fall where they may, he was rudely disenchanted, when at the All-Union Conference on the Planning of Genetics and Selection held in Leningrad in 1932, the guiding principle was adopted that genetics and plant breeding should henceforth be conducted from the standpoint of getting immediate practical results, with rigid adherence to the orthodoxy of dialectical materialism, research to be directed and controlled by the state.

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With the death of Michurin in 1935, an heir-apparent as the leader of the environmentalists and bitter opponent of Vavilov arose in the person of T. D. Lysenko, who had become famous among plant-breeders through his alleged feat of permanently changing winter wheat into spring wheat, and vice versa. In all the history of science there are probably only two men who approach Lysenko in having so many scientific honors and political preferences showered on them so lavishly by their countries, and they are the monumental figures of Cuvier, the founder of comparative anatomy, and Linnæus, the father of scientific classification of plants and animals. To enumerate only some of Lysenko’s distinctions, he is a member of the Academy of Science, director of the All-Union Institute of Selection and Genetics, scientific and administrative chief of the Commissariat of Agriculture of the USSR,

a deputy to the Supreme Soviet, and a member of the Commission on Nazi Crimes in Russia.

As Lysenko and his cohorts clamored for a purge of Mendelian-Morganian concepts from Russian genetics textbooks, Vavilov fought back with the serene courage of a man who would let nothing shake him from his conviction that a true man of science could recognize no other master than the truth. Finally, in 1939, Vavilov and Lysenko confronted each other in a great debate sponsored by the editors of the journal, *Under the Banner of Marxism*, which published the complete proceedings. But in the light of the dictum of the All-Union Congress, the outcome of the debate was a hopelessly foregone conclusion, and Vavilov must have known it. Shortly thereafter the outside scientific world stopped receiving news about Vavilov. It was as if the earth had swallowed him.

As the controversy raged with ever-increasing intensity between the two protagonists, rumors of the struggle had trickled through from secondary sources to the bewilderment of scientists outside Russia, particularly since only a few of the earlier writings had been translated into English. But in 1943 Lysenko published a book entitled "Heredity and Its Variability," in which he stated at length the arguments of the environmentalists, and only a few months ago an English translation of this work appeared for the benefit of scientists unfamiliar with the Russian language.

In order to understand what the Lysenko theory is about, let us first examine somewhat cursorily the genetic interpretation as to the nature of heredity, which the environmentalists claim to have so utterly demolished.

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In 1866, an Austrian monk completely unknown to the world of science published the results of his experiments on the breeding of peas, which he performed in the cloister gardens, in an obscure journal published by the natural history society of Brünn, a small city in the district of Moravia. This scientist, named Johann Gregor Mendel, died in 1884, little dreaming that his two short essays, which had not created so much as a ripple on the scientific thought of his times, would one day make his name one of the best known in biology, ranking with that of Charles Darwin. Although Mendel's revolutionary data had apparently been buried beyond recovery, in 1901 they were at last rediscovered and announced to an electrified scientific world by four of the world's leading students of heredity.

What Mendel had accomplished can best be illustrated by one of his characteristic experiments. By crossing the flowers of a red-flowered race of peas with those of a white-flowered race,

he obtained hybrids which uniformly bore red flowers. But when he crossed these hybrids with each other, he obtained offspring with red and white flowers in numbers generally in the proportion of 3 red to 1 white. Of these red-flowered plants, one-third always bred true red, and two-thirds were hybrids; the white-flowered plants always bred true white when crossed with each other under all circumstances. This proved that the "factor" which produced the red color and that which produced white in pea flowers did not mix in the hybrid—in other words, they were individual, separate entities. If this were not so, the hybrids when crossed with each other could not have produced pure red and pure white flowers, but only a mixture. This fundamental discovery was later found to hold true for every plant and animal whose breeding was analyzed, and also for man, in the case of every individual body trait. Thus was successfully demonstrated that there were separate factors responsible for all the different, individual characteristics of organisms which could be transmitted independently of each other to offspring through the sex cells. However, it was not until T. H. Morgan and his collaborators at Columbia University, working on the famous fruit-fly, *Drosophila*, proved in 1911 that these "characters" were borne in linear arrangement by submicroscopic particles called "genes" in the central part of every cell that the science of genetics was first placed on a firm footing. These genes were found to be located in structures, which, because they possessed an unusual affinity for dyes used to make them visible under the microscope, were called "chromosomes." The distribution of the chromosomes by parents to their offspring through the sex cells, thus distributing at the same time the various parental hereditary characteristics, has been observed so frequently in biology laboratories as to be commonplace.

The existence of this mechanism of heredity does not mean that the environment surrounding the developing organism does not play an important rôle in determining what the organism is going to be like. But as Professor Edgar Altenburg of the Rice Institute in Texas has recently pointed out, the question as to whether nature or nurture was more important raised a problem which really has no answer. It is as if someone wished to know whether a fish's tail or the water in which he swims is more important for the swimming. Obviously both are equally important, neither more important than the other. And so it is with heredity and environment.

But it is just at this point that Lysenko throws down the gauntlet to the geneticists. With their emphasis on the transmission of genes, says Lysenko, they have wilfully minimized the overwhelming significance of the environment in de-

termining not only the ultimate makeup of the body of the organism, but also the nature of heredity. He demonstrates the supposed fallacy of Mendelian-Morganian genetics by pointing to his own success in permanently changing winter wheat into spring wheat by using proper environmental conditions, such as controlled temperatures during certain stages in the development of the seedling; and also by grafting experiments with tomatoes.

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The latter experiments, according to Lysenko, are particularly valuable in showing the true explanation of heredity as controlled by the forces of the environment, through what Michurin originally called "the method of the mentor." This works somewhat as follows: a stem of a young tomato plant which normally produces white fruits is grafted onto a stem of a mature plant which regularly produces red tomatoes. Not only does Lysenko claim that the stem which originated from the white-fruited plant now can produce red tomatoes, but the seeds from these red fruits will likewise produce plants bearing red tomatoes. In other words, the matured-fruited plant "educated" the immature white-tomato stem, by means of the environmental condition of grafting, to produce red fruits instead of the customary white which would have arisen under normal conditions.

With an authoritative and complete version of the "environmentalist" position now available in English, geneticists have been having a field day pulling Lysenko's arguments to pieces. That such criticism was at first held back because of a reluctance to criticize adversely the scientific output of the Soviet Union is admitted by Professor Theodosius Dobzhansky of Columbia University, Lysenko's translator, in a remarkable analysis of the book in the January 1946 issue of the *Journal of Heredity*. "This consideration," states Dr. Dobzhansky, "weighed especially heavily with those Americans who are friendly to Russian science, and who justly desired to avoid anything that would prove in the least mischievous to the scientific or general relations between the two countries." But, concludes Dr. Dobzhansky, such trepidation is "misapplied, and particularly so when a scientific theory has strayed so far from the truth as Lysenko's has." Writing with sober restraint, he then alleges that it is not Lysenko's fault that both genetics and agriculture have not been completely wrecked in the Soviet Union.

Lysenko's critics agree that he has indulged in the most shameless distortions of the fundamental principles of genetics and that he is apparently shockingly ignorant, for a man with pretensions of being a scientist, of the most basic discoveries in this science. He has been ridiculed

for taking credit as the originator of a long-discredited theory of the accumulation of hereditary particles, or "pangenes," in the sex cells, after migrating there from all parts of the body, like delegates to a trades-union convention, without even the slightest reference to Charles Darwin, who had founded this theory. When Lysenko asserts that Mendel's data do not indicate the 3 to 1 ratio which is the cornerstone of genetics, he is apparently unfamiliar with the work of R. A. Fisher, Great Britain's leading authority on biological statistics, who recently subjected Mendel's data to the most rigorous and refined mathematical analysis, with the conclusion that Mendel's results were even more accurate than Mendel himself had dared to hope. To Lysenko's scoffing observation that no one has yet seen a gene, the obvious answer is that no one has ever seen an atom. One wonders if Lysenko would therefore consider the atomic bomb a figment of a capitalist scientist's imagination.

But what about the validity of Lysenko's own remarkable experiments? Scientific opinion appears fairly unanimous that under the conditions outlined, the results described by him have never been witnessed in similar experiments conducted outside the Soviet Union. Perhaps the most plausible explanation is that given by Professor Curt Stern of the University of Rochester, in a recent issue of the *American Naturalist*, in which he points out that Lysenko appears to have used breeding stock which was not of a pure, uniform genetic makeup, so that his findings are not attributable to solely environmental causes after all.

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The greatest censure of Academician Lysenko, however, results from his attempting to revive a theory that everyone had long believed decently laid to rest in the nineteenth century. This is nothing less than the hoary concept of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, the most famous exponent of which was the French naturalist, Lamarck. That Lamarck, a favorite of the leaders of the French Revolution, developed his theory at the peak of success of a proletarian revolt against the aristocracy is of more than passing interest in the light of the parallel with Lysenko. This theory has been most frequently illustrated by the case of the giraffe's neck, which, originally short, is stated to have become progressively elongated through the process of stretching for the most tender leaves at the top of the trees, throughout the generations. Every elementary textbook of biology has a complete discussion of the fallacies of this theory, and that the inheritance of acquired characteristics should pass for respectable science in Russia seems incredible.

The answer lies in the fact that this scientific

controversy is in reality not at all basically a quarrel by pedantic professors over the breeding of wheat and tomatoes. That the basic principles of heredity, derived from the study of other organisms, are equally applicable to man himself, with minor variations, is a commonplace of genetic science. In the light of this, what Lysenko has to say is particularly revealing. "No organism," states Lysenko, "ever realizes completely all of its hereditary possibilities." In other words, while potentialities for the development of certain traits may be available internally in an organism, the lack of the necessary conditions in the environment may prevent these characters from becoming realized. The answer therefore lies in what he calls "the liquidation of the conservatism of the nature of organisms," through applying the "method of the mentor."

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The imposition of the most rigorous restraints on the people by the political rulers, particularly in the molding of the young into docile supporters of a totalitarian régime, can thus be made palatable through the lure of the offer to make everyone a superman. What more tempting bait can be offered to slave laborers than a theory, decked out with all the scientific trappings, which assures them that they possess innately all the capacities for physical and intellectual greatness and distinction, the only thing necessary for such accomplishments being the imposition of certain "environmental" controls? While it is true that better results can be expected with the more pliable children under state control, still the oldsters need not despair. They too can be assured of a vigorous life span up to 150 years through the use of Bogomolets's elixir, which will be freely dispensed by the benevolent state. One may also speculate as to what use this theory may eventually have in fostering revolutionary unrest among the Eastern peoples, long smarting under the stigma of inferiority inflicted on them by their arrogant white masters.

That some scientists are still allowed to engage in Mendelian-Morganian experimental work is undoubtedly true, but they are sadly few in number. That they can also criticize Lysenko with apparent impunity is likewise true, but such criticism is generally rather mild. But this only means that the Soviet Union is unwilling to risk completely outraging world scientific opinion at this time.

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Yes, it would be interesting to know why Vavilov and the Soviet delegation did not appear at the International Genetics Congress in Edinburgh. And scientists would still like to know how Vavilov died, and why?

Along the Pan American Highway

HARRY SYLVESTER

SO I LEFT the family in Guatemala City—where we had flown from Mexico City in October—and flew to Tapachula to meet Herbert Cerwin and his wife. Cerwin for three years had done a remarkable job as director of the Office of Inter-American Affairs in Mexico City and had resigned as of the first of the year to go to Guatemala City to help a sick brother with his business. He had shipped his car to Tapachula and mine with it, and the Suchiate Division of the Mexican Railroads being in an even more complete state of anarchy than those of the rest of the country, he had sent along with the cars an expediter.

That night, December 29, we sat on the balcony of the Hotel International Rainbow in Tapachula, as much to get some cool air as to escape from the noise of four marimbas going together inside for the graduation dance of the local business school. I thought about Greene in this country—what had gone on in that subtle mind while its body racked by dysentery had gone muleback toward the north; and of the Chinese girl in the white dress, by far the prettiest at the dance, we had agreed; and even a little of de las Casas who had been the bishop here. That afternoon we had gone to the thatch village of San Benito and swam in the Pacific—I for the first time—and the food at the hotel had been good, and we felt pleasant and relaxed. The jungle was all around the city, and would close in like death given the chance, but it never had in four centuries and there were still some twelve thousand people here and churches and markets functioning and somewhere among them the Ponceites.

We hadn't quite been able to get away from the Guatemalan Consul-General. Unusually intelligent, by the consular standards of any country, he had been sent to Tapachula because of his Ponceite activity, and when I got off the plane that afternoon he had been around, just in case and even if I was an American. He worried, in a polite and even refined way, but finally he was convinced that neither the Cerwins nor myself were Ponceite spies and the next morning he was on hand to escort us to the border. Beside him, there was Saturnino Solis, the Mexican general in command of the military district, who had fought against Diaz in 1910 and will be heard from in a more impressive post now that Alemán is president; and a Georgian named Moses, who had been American Consul-General for years in

Tapachula and had managed to retain his sense of humor even in the heat, and along with it adopt a native child.

We were quite a caravan going toward the bridge and the border, a station-wagon, a sedan and two command cars, and the somewhat bewildered customs and immigration officials on the Guatemalan side—the bridge stands in a wilderness, spanning a murderous gorge—recovered only enough to register us improperly and to ask us to take some of their women-folk to the next town for the Sunday market. We said good-bye to officialdom and our two-car caravan began its climb upward while we waited impatiently for the one-way road to broaden out . . . something it never did do that day. On a level but bumpy stretch, as we crawled along, we encountered a party of Indians, one of them ahead of the others, drunkenly waving a machete. He took a cut at each of the cars, missed each, and we went on, hardly realizing what had happened until we had time to understand that actually someone had willed malice toward us and for no reason. I felt foolish to think of the shotgun, taken down and packed in oily rags on a back seat because I had not thought to need it here.

Other Indians stood aside on the road and imitated sardonically the sound of the cars' horns, but there was no more violence. The road climbed, now gradually, now steeply, with hair-pin turns coming ten and twelve at a time. In one village we stopped to inquire directions and a Chinese store-keeper ran out and became very excited, pressing oranges upon us and finally making it clear to Cerwin that he wanted us to take his thirteen-year-old son with us as far as San Marcos. The daily bus—a specially-hung station-wagon—did not run on Sundays and the Chinaman said that even though he was married to a Ladino he was not liked. We were the first Americans to pass in many weeks and he wanted us to take his son to San Marcos. Bewildered as well as touched, we took the boy along, he riding with Cerwin who had much better Spanish than either I or his wife. It was touching to be so trusted merely because we were Americans, but I know that none of us would have expected quite such faith if we had not encountered it.

It took us all day to do the ninety miles to Quetzaltenango and I felt as though I had driven a five hundred mile day in the States. But we had come only ninety miles although we had gone up from 300 feet to 7,800. We stayed at the Hotel Recreo, where the German finqueros had used to gather before the war. Like the rest of the town it was stone, built around a narrow court-yard in which banana trees grew despite the freezing temperatures the night sometimes brings. The half-German sons who ran the

place were puzzled and surprised at the car with the American diplomatic license, but they were pleasant enough and the food was the best in Guatemala.

Quetzaltenango was neither Latin nor Indian, its stone walls and narrow streets reminded me of what I have thought Balkan towns must be like. It is known for its marimbas and one could not walk through the dark streets without hearing, near or far, their music. I slept well in the cold, thinking tomorrow would be an easier day.

The road was wider, but the dust so pervasive that we had to travel a mile apart, the lead car stopping at a set time to wait for the second one. We wore dust-masks and at times felt foolishly like the desperadoes of the "Lone Ranger."

A series of between thirty and forty hair-pin turns brought us up well over ten thousand feet and the country spread out all around us, a panorama of high valleys, of pine forests and long, narrow vistas that reminded me of northern New Mexico. In Solola we got out in the Plaza, the only white people in sight. The Indians squatted before their pottery and cloth and food in the open market-place, against the steady wind, and from the edge of the Plaza you could look down at the famous lake of Atitlan, with the volcanoes rising sheer from its waters. Below we knew were the tourists, the lake's shores their last outpost. But here was the edge of wild Guatemala—the Indians, the height, the pushing wind. Then a loudspeaker in the middle of the Plaza began to play "People Will Say We're in Love."

The Screen

April in September

THE ENGLISH have sent us another of those strictly adult films that don't make a mint of money in this country but do stir up the envy of thoughtful Hollywood producers. And this one is very likely to win the interest of intelligent moviegoers.

"*Brief Encounter*" tells in unusually good cinema an unusual story, a love story without glamor but surging with a freshness and vitality that make its prosaic, middle-class characters emerge with a lifelike reality. It concerns mainly two middle-aged people: a housewife who comes to Milford Junction every Thursday to shop and see a movie, and a doctor who comes to the same town once a week to visit a hospital. Their first chance meeting is repeated. Their Thursday acquaintanceship grows into friendship and into love before they realize what has happened. Then an assignation is broken up by the untimely return of the doctor's friend to his apartment. And soon thereafter, the couple find themselves saying good-bye.

The plot is as simple as that. But Noel Coward, who gave the film such a fine production, also wrote the dialogue which is not in his usual smartalecky vein, but

warm and understanding. It crackles with good humor, particularly when carried on by the minor characters like the attendants in the railroad station, and it delights with its easy conversation between the two principals who are dumbfounded at the situation in which they realize they are "only middle-aged once."

Almost the whole film is told in a flashback as the wife imagines she is relating the affair to her own husband. She is perplexed as she tells it because she loves her husband and children, and Director David Lean has been especially successful in catching this note of confusion. In fact his direction is exceedingly skilful throughout the picture: in the transitions, in the stream-of-thought sequences and in the display of trivia that gives the story its matter-of-fact quality. The movie has been well edited, and the musical accompaniment (mainly Rachmaninoff's Concerto No. 3, played by Eileen Joyce with the National Symphony Orchestra) is excellent. But perhaps the greatest departure from an American film in handling this story is the casting of the two principal characters. Neither of them is particularly handsome or buried under romantic appeal. Celia Johnson portrays the wife as a plain woman greatly concerned with her family and surprised at herself, that her lies became easy before they became degrading. Trevor Howard as the doctor (also married, but we do not see his wife) is a straightforward chap, really an idealist and thoroughly wrapped up in preventive medicine. These two, rather ordinary people who would not dream of hurting anyone, suffer when they discover their love has grown out of bounds.

I don't know whether Producer-writer Coward or Director Lean should get credit for the picture's most brilliant device, but it certainly deserves comment: the movie opens with the couple's farewell in the railroad station being interrupted by a talkative friend of the woman; later toward the end of the long flashback, this whole scene is repeated word for word and only then do we get the full meaning of its sadness and irony. Of such stuff are good films made. And because of such good cinematic theater is "Brief Encounter" outstanding adult entertainment.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Heaven in a Rage

HARRY LORIN BINSSE

RARELY do I read a novel—and I have to read all too many of them—which, when finished, leaves the emotions at ease in satisfaction. Nearly always, even in the case of thoroughly admirable tales told, there is a blemish to haunt you, leaving behind its ugly recollection—a blemish which, because of the high merit of the whole—it would be unkindly to mention, like a little wart on the nose of a beautiful woman. Some people prefer it that way, which accounts for the recurrent practice of the beauty spot, for the current disinterest, perhaps, in perfection.

Yet there are works of art, in a category all their

own, free of warts and wens and bunions, and for this merit they are memorable and are remembered, even though they may fall far short of rugged genius, so often masked behind the excrescences which served Socrates for a face. The greatest enemy of such achievement is thinness, as it is likewise the obsessive fault of pretty girls. For this is the trick: never too much to file your edges, yet to have them filed; never to let your smoothness turn out merely well-licked; never to let your refining remove the mother from the vinegar, life and passion from your story. In painting there is Vermeer, there is Chardin. In music there is some of Chopin. And among writers of more recent days there is Mary Webb, there is Willa Cather. In such company, I believe, belongs the first prose novel of Christopher La Farge, "The Sudden Guest."*

We are told that it seeks to be "a parable of our time, for our time." Perhaps every self-respecting book attempts as much. Thank heaven Mr. La Farge seems not to have taken this intention too seriously, so that the final allegory of his work is broad enough not to fret us. It amounts to no more than this: we are living in a time of great change, with old values in heavy weather, with the waves lashing at seawalls and high winds straining our rigging. A reader of "The Sudden Guest" will find no playful Chamberlains or Hitlers, hiding behind dark glasses or in Miss Leckton's carefully locked closets. What happens to her and to her guests in no way prefigures the future of atomic energy, or of ourselves.

What Mr. La Farge had done—has magnificently done—is to pour into a single character, to distill over her, all the essential oils of a time and a place in our human history and geography. He has painted a portrait, and his subject, very much one living person, so sums up a host of generically like persons we have known that we feel as we do with some of Copley's best pictures, we have surely some time, somewhere met and known Miss Leckton very well. She is the ultimate fruit of the heart—not the eccentricities—of the nineteenth century, and of the nineteenth century in great prosperity along the Atlantic seaboard. For the dominant of that century—the heavy handed dominant and the ideal of most of what it dominated—was the middle class, and the highest value, both of that class and of all the squirming, filthy garbage heaps it sat on and of which, except for its very few Jobs, it was unaware, was security. A man of property owned *securities*, and he kept them in a *safe* deposit box. Security is still our poor human Shibboleth: the difference is that we seek it and know we seek it and hardly expect to find it. Miss Leckton had it. Had it incontrovertably, and believed with the faith of a martyr that there was something morally wrong with you if you didn't have it. Security, the even tenor of a life made for your special benefit, served her and all her non-fictional kind as philosophy, theology, morals and esthetics, all woven into one. Its possession was heaven and your just reward; its loss was hell and your just punishment, and since you either had it or you didn't, there was no purgatory. When Miss Leckton's niece, Leah, defies her aunt and

*Coward. \$2.50.

marries her Jew, Miss Leckton punishes her by withholding her income, and condemns her parents for having been fools enough not to have placed within her own power ultimate control over the principal.

In 1938 Miss Leckton knew there would be no war. Wars destroy security, and since she possessed it, and, possessing it, automatically deserved it, there *could* be no war. Men who worried about Munich were sensationalists, "like the evening papers," and did it only to annoy Miss Leckton. In September, 1938, she had done nothing to make her house fast against the hurricane.

Even in 1944, after all she had suffered, after the war had, incredibly, come, she almost convinced herself that there would not be another hurricane. Yet this time she knew, deep within her, that there would be, and this time she took steps. On the broader canvas, 1914 did for nineteenth century man what 1938 did for Miss Leckton. It shattered him so badly that he too put up his blinds against 1939, built his Maginot Walls, passed his Neutrality Acts.

The actual narrative of "The Sudden Guest" is classically simple, a brilliant device. It tells the history of Miss Leckton's soul during the few hours she endured, alone, the hurricane of 1944 in her house on a small Rhode Island peninsula. The storm's undeviating pattern, her solitude, her fear because she knew her god was gone—all forced back in upon her the minutest recollections of the earlier storm, which she had lived out in the same place and which had swept her god away. For the earlier storm, coming at the flood of the tide and in the light of day and in the full bloom of her security, had shatteringly piled into her house a swarm of unbidden and unwanted guests, seeking refuge, to whom at its climax she had cried, "What do I know about any of you? Where do you come from? Why are you here? Did I ask you to come? Do you know what's happened to *me* today? Does anyone think, even for one moment, of what this may mean to *me*?"

The heresy of the bourgeois was through deifying life to deny life. Everything was good that served the bourgeois's good life and its endless continuance; everything was bad that upset that life or threatened its continuance. Money, the great anchor, the great lever, the ultimate chastiser and the ultimate rewarder, the only compounder of God and Satan, became more than a symbol of value. It became identical with life, with goodness. And the primary virtue was consideration. People were inconsiderate, because they got in the way. Constantly Miss Leckton judged people by the consideration they showed her. That it should work both ways, of course, was to the bourgeois unthinkable: that others should suffer, die, be wretched was all part of the comedy specially provided for his enjoyment. That he should suffer, die, be wretched was stark tragedy, mean inconsideration on the part of God, intolerable. And thus the cure for this heresy is twofold. One level—the human level—Mr. La Farge sees with great clarity. These are his last three paragraphs:

Yet there was still interminable night that lay ahead and any dawn would rise only as she made it to rise. Night, like

this storm, was solitary. If dawn were peopled, then with whom? With whom?

I wonder, she thought, what has happened to Mrs. Barber in this storm?

The sound and meaning of the words within her mind, astonished her.

But there is another level Mr. La Farge perhaps consciously omits. I say perhaps consciously because of a passage in his account of the young Italian girl, later to be one of Miss Leckton's unwonted guests, clinging to a telephone pole as she floats in the violence of the waves. She has been praying—to Almighty God and the Virgin and Saint Christopher and Saint Anthony:

Thinking back on this in later years, when she had become wholly mature and wholly corrupt and when her battle for her personal redemption was still ahead of her, it seemed to her that this was the highest point of happiness in her life; that all the emotions that flooded her then were as clear and as clean as the storm that bred them; that the terror of the storm was only a power to arouse her, to show forth her own innocence and the simple beauty of trying to live—to live, but to do so within the orbit of the God she had later lost and might never find again—or, finding, discover as a different being, His manifold face no longer full of the sweetness of loving compassion.

That other level is the level of Léon Bloy.

More Books of the Week

Animal Farm. George Orwell. Harcourt. \$1.75.

IT WAS NOT a far fetched comparison which at the time this book was published in England, likened it to "Gulliver's Travels" or rather to its chapter which is devoted to the country of the Houyhnhnms and deals with Gulliver's adventures in the realm of the horses.

On the other hand, many readers of this book would be unable to get away from "Animal Farm's" great relevance to contemporary Russia and might think it is nothing beyond a very brilliant and very cruel satire on the communist experiment. The temptations to regard it purely and simply as a short and brilliant *roman à clef* are very great indeed. The reader experiences a little thrill in discovering famous characters in cruel disguises. The old boar who tells the animals at Manor Farm of his dream of a happy future world in which they will not be exploited and slaughtered by Man is surely Lenin. Boxer, the strong, kind, slow-witted horse, who is heroic in an emergency, easy to mislead and fundamentally decent is obviously the Common Man who is getting more and more frightened of the century which Mr. Henry Wallace dedicated to him. In Napoleon the Machiavellian pig it is very difficult not to see Stalin, whereas Snowball the dreamer pig, who is expelled from Animal Farm and provides an excellent scapegoat for the future failures of the experiment is Trotsky. And who can be the rest of the pigs, who had helped to transform Manor Farm into "Animal Farm" under the war-cry, "Two legs bad, four legs good" and who enjoy special privileges for their leadership? They are surely members of the Communist Party.

In any case the revolution succeeds in the name of *all animals are equal*, but soon enough there are quarrels between the two pig-leaders: Snowball the dreamer and Napoleon the realist. Snowball is driven out.

Now, Snowball during the revolution had been awarded the decoration of "Animal Hero First Class" and his expulsion causes great surprise, though the sheep and the hens quickly learn that Snowball was a traitor and the decoration had been awarded by mistake. And so the story continues, about as one would expect. Finally "Animal Farm" adopts a new slogan: *all animals are equal but some animals are more equal than the rest.*

"Animal Farm," however, is deeper and larger than this, in the same way as Swift's Gulliver is of a more permanent significance than just being an attack on the Tory Party in eighteenth century England. It has implications—and they are many—which are older and more universal than the past and present of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It gives a splendid illumination of Acton's immortal thesis according to which power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. It also supplies a very simple, very clear and to my mind a very adequate statement on man's craving for the absolute, which is the most powerful basis of nationalism: the most important, most real and most threatening political problem of our time, which an orthodox Marxist can never see in its true proportion. He still maintains that the economic problem is more important than the political problem and that the two—the twin problems of our century—cannot be separated from each other. Orwell knows that this is not the case and that the economic problem is the lesser of the two, though being "nearer the camera" it most of the time appears to be out of correct proportion. He also knows that a man who loves his country unreasonably in as many words issues an invitation to any ruling oligarchy to be exploited and trampled upon.

The revolution goes wrong at Animal Farm, the old doctrines, the shining words of the Constitution which were painted on the barn door are perverted, yet the animals never gave up hope.

More, they never lost, even for an instant, their sense of honor and privilege in being members of Animal Farm. They were still the only farm in the whole country—in all England!—owned and operated by animals. Not one of them, not even the youngest, not even the newcomers who had been brought from farms ten or twenty miles away, ever ceased to marvel at that. And when they heard the gun booming and saw the green flag fluttering at the masthead, their hearts swelled with imperishable pride, and the talk turned always towards the old heroic days, the expulsion of Jones, the writing of the Seven Commandments, the great battles in which the human invaders had been defeated. None of the old dreams had been abandoned. The Republic of the Animals which Major had foretold, when the green fields of England should be untrodden by human feet, was still believed in. Some day it was coming: it might not be soon, it might not be within the lifetime of any animal now living, but still it was coming. . . .

Passages like these seem to contain a good deal of survival value for "Animal Farm." Because it is a parable, it escapes the great pitfall of reportage and documentary writing which by their very natures leave their material without significance. Orwell, however, is an artist, who knows precisely how effective it can be not to say explicitly what he means, and this little tale of a hundred and twenty odd pages has more explosive energy and actuality than a five hundred page carefully documented report on Russia. More than that: it is poetry, which is the type of journalism "that stays news."

Orwell is not angry with Russia, or with any other

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country, because that country "turned Socialist." On the contrary he is angry with Russia because Russia does not believe in a classless and democratic society. His anger and frustration are those of the man who—like himself—in spite of his social origin and upbringing, had for months been a dishwasher and a "Down and Out In Paris And London" and who—like himself—went to fight for democratic Spain in an anti-Stalin loyalist battalion. In short, Orwell is angry with Russia because Russia is *not* socialist.

Of the heritage of the English upper middle-class and of his early upbringing he shares nothing but a certain amount of insularity, and this in spite of years he spent abroad in close contact with members of the working classes and intellectuals. This characteristic which is missing from the others is to my mind the reason why Orwell is not a real socialist but a well meaning and intelligent radical liberal. He knows fully that internationalism is essential but he does not feel it. It is part of his knowledge but not part of his culture.

His "Critical Essays"—published in this country under the title "Dickens, Dali and Others" with his brilliant notes on Charles Dickens, his penetrating analysis of boy's weeklies and of naughty postcards together with his amusing attacks on the "smelly little orthodoxies" of Communism had the *success d'estime* of his "Burmese Days," his first book published in America. His two novels dealing with the life of the English working class "Keep the Aspidistra Flying" and "The Clergyman's Daughter" are as interesting as his essay on Henry Miller, the American novelist, called "Inside The Whale." His best works unknown in this country are, however, his reportages "Down And Out In Paris And London" and "The Road To Wigan Pier," which contains a deeply moving autobiographical section, and about the best book about poverty in England.

ADAM DE HEGEDUS.

The Absolute Weapon. Atomic Power and World Order. Edited by Bernard Brodie. Harcourt. \$2.00.

THIS extremely interesting publication of the Yale Institute of International Studies, in which five authors collaborate, is a very realistic appraisal of the effect of the atomic bomb on strategy and politics and proposes methods of handling the problem.

Brodie starts from the standpoint that it will be possible in the near future to drop, by long range airplane or rocket, atomic bombs anywhere in the world; while he discounts the danger of their being brought in on any great scale by saboteurs. A present day industrial state would be completely paralyzed if all cities above 100,000 population were wiped out. Of these there are 92 in the United States, and it would take perhaps 200-500 bombs to wipe them out. If 2000-5000 planes started out, each with an atomic bomb, and only ten per cent came through, no city of the above mentioned size would remain. On the other hand many more bombs than 2000-5000 would not give a higher degree of superiority since no worthwhile target would remain. In particular, a fleet which can be dispersed is not a promising target for a bomb, as has been confirmed at Bikini. After such a bomb attack, which would be over within hours—herein lies the greatest difference from the usual air attacks—the country attacked would have to be occupied by shock—or paratroopers. Since the atom bomb is therefore the weapon par excellence for the aggressor, what can be done?

The authors think, realistically, that only the combination of two circumstances can do that within the next few years: the absolute certainty of retaliation and the conviction that victory is hopeless. The former would need, in the United States, installations with launching sites, separate communications and stockpiles of atom bombs, spread over the uninhabited parts of the country, with a commander authorized to retaliate immediately as soon as this country were attacked with atomic bombs. The authors believe, from the example of the launching sites of the German V-2, that these retaliation sites could not be put out of commission by the attacker's bombs. Here, however, they neglect the possible poisoning effects of radioactive gases.

Then there must be an organization of "minute men" ready to take up the defense against ground troops, and here the fleet keeps its rôle. A. Wolfers recognizes that the possibility of any future war depends on Soviet-United States relations. The book was published before Mr. Baruch submitted his plan, but P. E. Corbett and Wm. T. R. Fox feel that an insistence on solutions which are politically impossible now will bring war nearer, rather than discourage war. Such are drives for world government and the insistence on abolishing the veto power.

They think the most promising solution is to reestablish the former power pattern, with Russia also getting the bomb—which would reassure her in face of her pathological fear of the others ganging up on her—but that both the United States and Russia get set for immediate retaliation, which under the UN charter is justified as the right of self defense, and a military ground setup which would make conquest by the other impossible.

KARL F. HERZFELD.

The Revolt of the South and West. A. G. Mezerik. Duell. \$3.00.

THE COMPLAINT of this book is an old one: "Ten highly industrialized Eastern states dominate the country, and they have subordinated all of the South and the West, two thirds of our geographical area, one half of all the population. These ten Eastern states are rich—to which no one objects. They dominate the rest of the country and keep it poor—to which one half of the people of the country . . . objects." The South and West "look at the East with growing anger, convinced it is the East which today exercises the new tyranny, industrial domination." Mr. Mezerik gives a full bill of particulars. This country cannot be united while regions of great potential capacities are exploited, being compelled to export their wealth in the least profitable forms, limit their skills, and yield up their cash to distant claimants.

In these pages one hears echoes of the century-old strictures of John C. Calhoun of South Carolina and the robust protests of William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska half as long ago. A multitude of conventions, resolutions, editorials and local political speeches swells the chorus with attack, self-exculpation, threats and some reasonable plans of remedy. Secessionists, Homesteaders, Grangers, Populists all jangled their chains and cried out against cruel Wall Street masters.

Mr. Mezerik is certain that wartime development in South and West at government behest has given these sections a taste of their inheritance, and that they will not return to the mess of pottage. Their resolve is more than regional. They want a prosperous, full-production Amer-

ica, and present their demands in the name of the national interest. They go further and proclaim that American world policy toward backward peoples in far places will not be generous and wise while it is dominated by those who have cracked the whip over cotton raisers and metal miners at home. "The people of our South and West have good . . . reasons for being skeptical that Chungking will get much as long as Tuscaloosa is held down. Our good intentions for the world can be demonstrated right here at home, where they can be expressed now, at once, in action. If we are not willing to speed the development of the subordinated areas and peoples in our own country, the chances are altogether too good that talk of extending opportunity to foreign countries will end in a jumble of high-sounding words."

The author speaks of "a new and strange industrial civil war. Whole regions of this country feel they have been denied opportunity to grow and develop. Their belief that this pattern of oppression is deliberate is mounting." However, one remembers several items in extenuation. Industrial and finance capitalism to which America has given allegiance were never expected to do farsighted planning for the even maturing, economically, of all parts of the country. Its benefits in this respect were supposed to be incidental, albeit in the long run beneficial. Wall Street brokers worked on the theory of proximate profits, not of national prosperity. If the menaces of monopoly were not anticipated by the country, that was not the fault of its practitioners. If efforts of government to control monopoly were unavailing, the blame belongs to the public which was so long content with delusive remedies.

Further, not all tyrannies in South and West which have slowed development of those regions came from the Northeast. Before these regions were beholden to distant economic masters, their local lords found means of oppressing workers, ruining resources for quick returns, and fomenting strife between groups in their own population for unworthy purposes. Mr. Mezerik says correctly that Southern demagogues who magnify race hostility play the game of Eastern exploiters. But, with things as they are, Georgia and Mississippi seem to need little tutelage from outside intriguers. The Associated Farmers, so-called, of California, may know little about digging in the soil, but enough of them are Native Sons of the Golden West.

Mr. Mezerik tells how wicked stepmother and haughty sisters of the East have gone off to the ball, leaving Cinderella, whether of South or West, sitting in the ashes. This Cinderella has sometimes had the luckless notion that the fairy godmother will appear in the form of low wages and long hours. The appeal of local enterprises is to forbearance while industry gets a start in a depleted section. This is a cure which may prove as bad as the disease. If it succeeds in shifting industry from regions of higher standards, the national gain may be slight or nil. The proposal implies a partnership between enterprisers and workers the fruits of which will later, in event of success, be shared between them. But the result is rarely that. Owners who have presented themselves as patriots in the beginning know how to preserve themselves as profiteers later.

Both South and West have had home boys who advised against consuming energy in jealous charges against the more fortunate East. The sovereign remedy, they declared, was in matching accomplishments of the envied by intelligent planning and work. This program seemed

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to many to be impracticable because capital was lacking. Instructive instances proved, however, that credit offered where there was prospect of success and determination to seize the opportunity. Today capital and many costly skills are made available by a national government which comes to the aid of under-developed regions. Perhaps they have been colonials injured by Eastern imperialism. But also, in their present state they injure the country. Mr. Mezerik gives an exciting brief account of the aims and accomplishments of the Tennessee Valley Authority. He pays tribute to the way in which the people of seven states have grasped the helping hand. That is not the easiest thing to do when your senators and judges and newspapers warn you of dangers. The TVA has been a great teacher. One of its aptest pupils was Wendell Willkie. He began his public career, when the leading private utilities magnate in the TVA area, by fearing Washington. He ended by urging world government.

Discriminatory freight rates are being corrected and must be further revised. "Pittsburgh plus" has yielded to local steel developments to a degree. As Mr. Mezerik shows, leaders and organizations in South and West are now thinking in national terms, are centering on removal of obstacles that block national progress in the form of regional opportunity. The chance is before them. But South and West will not reach the promised land until they have done some internal renovating as well as external accusing. They have colonials on their own doorsteps—Negroes, Mexicans, Japanese—whom they habitually mistreat. When the South and West revolt, watch out that the attack of sharecroppers, migrants, and evacuees is not against state capitols rather than against Wall Street.

BROADUS MITCHELL.

Reconquest: Its Results and Responsibilities. Hallett Abend. Doubleday. \$2.75.

THE GREATER sympathy which is supposed to result from intimate contact with other peoples in other lands was apparently not awakened by Mr. Abend's years of newspaper service in the Far East. China he sees as hopelessly ill-fed, disease-ridden, divided, devastated, militarily weak. Soviet Russia has robbed China of the badly needed resources of Manchuria and seems ready to intervene on long-prepared pretexts and gobble up as much of China as she can. But the violence of his full-lunged contempt is reserved for the Japanese; seldom has a book printed in America reached such heights in national denunciation.

One of the author's most searing chapters deals with Japan's record in World War I. Here are a few of the highlights. "For the only time in her modern career did Japan not attack by surprise and declare war later." The week which she carefully allowed to elapse between her ultimatum to Berlin and her declaration of war "gave Germany a chance to get a strong naval squadron out of that portion of the western Pacific where it could have been demolished by the Japanese fleet." Instead of collaborating with the British Navy to sink deadly German raiders and blockade runners Japan took over for her own use the 800 German Pacific islands which later cost so many American lives; she established herself solidly on the Chinese mainland in the process of investing German Tsingtao (which she had declared she would return to China and of course did not). In 1915 she presented China with her infamous Twenty-one Demands. And

while doing virtually nothing to further the Allied cause, Japan concentrated on building up her own fleet so that at the war's end she had to be reckoned with as one of the chief naval powers. Some ally!

If all this—and a lot more—is insufficient to reveal Japan from 1914 to 1918 in a most dastardly light, there are plenty of earlier and later stories. For instance, when China in 1936 still refused official recognition of the rape of Manchuria, goods were smuggled in from Japanese-seized territories in such vast quantities that "thousands of Chinese merchants and firms went into bankruptcy. . . . In Tientsin six huge Chinese-owned cotton mills failed. . . . The effect of this wholesale swindle upon Chinese government finances was catastrophic. Two North China customhouses which normally collected \$40,000,000 in tariffs a year were able to take in only a sum slightly under \$4,000,000. . . . Japan told China that if her customs cruisers tried to stop any Japanese ships the Japanese Navy would open fire upon the Chinese vessels and treat them 'like pirates upon the high seas.'" In response to protests from the United States and Europe the Tokyo Foreign Office was bare-faced enough to state that "Japan has never attempted to interfere with the internal affairs of China."

Mr. Abend's vindictiveness against Japanese deceitfulness and barbarity (the latter I have not alluded to elsewhere in this review) explains in large measure, I think, his whole-hearted apologies for our introduction of the atom bomb into modern warfare. Naturally, his main line of argument is not the despicable character of the enemy, but how can his opinion in the matter escape that derivation. He defends Hiroshima and Nagasaki chiefly on the basis of the lives thereby saved. If he has heard that the Japanese surrender was already in process before the bombing, he makes no mention of that all-important factor. He is equally emphatic—and this time rightly—about China's betrayal (by Britain, Russia and the US) at Yalta, where "the hands of the clock of world advancement were turned back a full two score years." He has a number of typical war correspondent incidents to recount in these pages and strong opinions about many things. But "Reconquest's" pervading impression is so violently anti-Japanese that any American reader, no matter how bitterly disheartened by the fruits of our costly victory, will have some reason to be glad that in any case we did "win the war." EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

Winter Meeting. Ethel Vance. Little, Brown. \$2.50.

NO ORDINARY love story this. Perhaps I shouldn't even use that phrase in tagging it, for the two words placed side by side have a connotation which this book, although it is a love story, avoids. What makes the tale extraordinary are the two people involved and the author's skill in telling about "l'affaire Grieve."

That is what Stacy called the whole incident: Stacy, the modish correctly-cultured New Yorker, the sort of prissy-uncle whom Clifton Webb plays so well in the movies. He was giving a small dinner during the war for a recently-returned hero. He invited his luscious secretary for the handsome young lieutenant; and for himself he invited Susan Grieve, 30ish, a New England ivory-tower poet whose combination of virginal asceticism and elegance fascinated him. But things did not work out as planned; after a long, dull (not to the reader) and awkward evening, "Slick" Novak, the hero (a Catholic and

only two generations American) went home with Miss Grieve (whose ancestors date back to the Puritans) and stayed the night.

Then the affair continues when the lovers go to Susan's quaint but genuinely charming house in Connecticut. Bit by bit the pasts of this couple are revealed, pasts that conditioned their attitudes toward their falling in love and its aftermath. We already know that she is the daughter of a Unitarian minister and that he spent a mischievous boyhood in Wisconsin before he became a hero on a submarine. She tells about her mismated parents: her sluttish mother who ran off with another man and her father whose reason gave way in this very house when his man-made humanitarian philosophy suffered too many defeats. Then finally in the middle of a sleepless night, Novak reveals his secret: about his old desire to become a priest, a desire curtailed but not ended by his confessor and the outbreak of war.

Ethel Vance writes well: her short well-named novel (this is no story of a continued passion in lush summer atmosphere) has thoughtful depths seldom found in a story like this. I don't believe Miss Vance is a Catholic, but she has understanding of things Catholic (Novak's unhappiness during the whole affair, his burning desire to offer his life) as well as the reactions of non-Catholics toward religious aspects from which they shy (Susan's Protestant aversion toward the priesthood, her insistence that dogma is vulgar, her unbelief in miracles). The novel's suspense is heightened by the author's restrained style which tells the compelling story more through conversation than action. The solution is perhaps inevitable, but I defy any reader who starts the book to put it aside; after the two-thirds point when Novak walks out on Susan, it fairly races to its end. "Winter Meeting" is a good minor novel; it should have many admirers, and will probably be disliked by the same people who dislike "Brideshead Revisited."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Rembrandt, the Jews and the Bible. Franz Landsberger. Jewish Publication Society. \$3.00.

THE FORMER curator of the Berlin Jewish Museum, now a Professor in Cincinnati, opens up an aspect of Rembrandt which is generally ignored. While thumbing through these beautiful illustrations you become acquainted with much more of Jewish history than is common knowledge for the average man with an interest in history. With sadness you realize that Hitler had countless forerunners and that exile was the daily bread of the fathers of those who are hunted from camp to camp and from Palestine to Cyprus. It also shows us the liberality and kindness of the otherwise so stern Calvinists of Holland in the seventeenth century who gave asylum to the victims of their archfoe, Spain, and thus established a tradition by which Portuguese and Eastern Jews profited. This is a beautiful collection of an unknown Rembrandt and a fine sociological picture of Dutch Jewry of his age. There is no doubt that Rembrandt was a child of his day, as he seems to regard the Jews not so much as Hollanders as fascinating Orientals—a viewpoint basic to the Dutch asylum laws of his time. This attitude is somehow reminiscent of Hilaire Belloc's singular view of the Jewish "question."

The only criticism I can possibly make is that the author approaches the middle ages and their art with a typical German bourgeois mentality and that he is there-

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fore slightly biased against Christianity. Like so many European Jews, he views the dark ages through two glasses: the Jewish one and a "liberal" Protestant one. It would help his book greatly if he corrected some of his statements.

H. A. REINHOLD.

The Story of Lithuania. Thomas G. Chase. Stratford. \$3.50.

MANY AMERICANS are inclined to regard Lithuania as a kind of synthetic creation produced by World War I. But the Lithuanian nation was formed neither within the short space of a few decades nor in the course of a single century. Her national traditions extend much further. A definite and unbroken continuity—as this volume shows—characterizes her history from the very first days of her appearance as an organized political entity some 800 years ago. That continuity was not obliterated or overshadowed by her Union with Poland in 1569; or destroyed by the partitions she suffered together with Poland in 1795. It was repeatedly and energetically manifested during her suppression under the Czarist régime of the nineteenth century; it has not ceased today, even while Communist Moscow insists upon her incorporation with the Soviet Union.

This little volume is the best Lithuanian history available in English, although it has some glaring weaknesses.

The main emphasis is on the political trends, and comparatively little attention is paid to the social and cultural aspects. The bibliography misses, strangely, several American studies, including those of M. W. Graham. Hardly anything is said about the important rôle played by the American Lithuanians in the nationalistic rejuvenation of their native land, possibly because Chase is unacquainted with the literature on this field in English.

JOSEPH S. ROUCEK.

The Love of God. Andrew Green, O.S.B. Herder. \$2.50.

IN TWENTY short chapters Dom Green has put together a useful guide to the aims and practices basic in Christian spirituality. Quite in accord with the Benedictine tradition, he has included a dozen fine pages that treat wisely of the need and meaning of liturgical prayer. From the nature of the case, originality will hardly be expected of either subject matter or solution, but there is at least a good bit of thought evidenced in the arrangement of the book. And those acquainted with Catholic philosophy will soon detect an application of the methods characteristic of the scholastics. Although such an approach makes for clarity and for emphasis upon the rational grounds behind true spirituality, it does entail a certain sacrifice of the warmth commonly found in devotional works. But whether that is fault or virtue the reader may decide for himself.

HENRY G. J. BECK.

The English Dictionary from Cawdrey to Johnson: 1604-1755. De Witt T. Starnes and Gertrude E. Noyes. North Carolina. \$3.50.

THERE are some peculiar people who live by dictionaries; indeed we have even heard of families where a dictionary was kept on the sideboard in the dining room so that prandial arguments might be settled with a minimum of delay in the process of ingestion. For such people "The English Dictionary from Cawdrey to Johnson" should prove fascinating. For it will explain to them the process of which their loved book is the result.

The Inner Forum

American Benedictines

IT IS exactly one hundred years since the first permanent foundation of the venerable Benedictine Order (over 1400 years old) was established in the United States—near Pittsburgh. The first house was St. Vincent's Monastery at Latrobe, Pa., which has in the past century grown into an archabbey, with its own college and seminary.

A commemoration of this historic milestone comprised part of the 91st annual convention of the Catholic Central Union (*Central Verein*) held at Newark, N. J., last month. St. Mary's Abbey Church of that city was attended by the delegates of this organization of German-American Catholics for a Solemn Pontifical Mass at which the Right Reverend Abbot Patrick O'Brien was the celebrant.

Three-day ceremonies were also held over Labor Day at the Latrobe archabbey, where Father Boniface Wimmer and his companions from the Abbey of Wetten in Bavaria had first founded a Benedictine community in this country. Nine years after their arrival the community was raised to the dignity of an abbey according to the statutes of the Congregation of Bavaria. Soon afterward these Benedictine monks began to establish other houses in various parts of the United States.

Ten of the altars comprising the national Benedictine shrine installed in the crypt of St. Vincent's Archabbey Church were dedicated during these ceremonies to the patron saints of the American abbeys founded by the monks of St. Vincent's: St. John's of Collegeville, Minnesota (where *Orate Fratres* is published), founded in 1856; St. Benedict's, Atchison, Kansas, and St. Mary's, Newark, New Jersey, 1857; St. Mary's, Belmont, North Carolina, and St. Bernard's, Cullman, Alabama, 1884; St. Procopius, Lisle, Illinois, 1885; Holy Cross, Canon City, Colorado, 1886; St. Leo's, St. Leo, Florida, 1889; St. Peter's, Muenster, Saskatchewan, Canada, 1892; St. Bede's, Peru, Illinois, 1910.

A number of Benedictine Abbots participated in these ceremonies at St. Vincent's Archabbey, as did Archbishop Cicognani the Apostolic Delegate, Bishop Ready of Columbus, Ohio, and Governor Martin of Pennsylvania. Fourteen of the windows of the shrine have as central figures the outstanding Benedictine of each of the centuries of the Order's existence; another represents the Holy Rule; one window shows Saint Benedict welcoming his followers into Heaven.

CONTRIBUTORS

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